

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of shielding a bearing against undesirable matter, which bearing is mounted in a bearing casing including a side cover covering a side of the bearing casing and mounting a bearing seal, and which bearing and which supports a shaft for rotation, ~~against undesirable matter~~, the method including

laterally covering a side of the bearing and the bearing casing such as laterally to overlap or hood or cowl said side cover by means of a circumferential shield rotatably firmly attached to fast with the shaft and having a peripheral rim at least partially overlapping the bearing casing;

when the shaft is rotating, dilating ~~dialing~~ said peripheral rim to provide running clearance, shielding the bearing casing from stray undesirable matter and flinging any such stray undesirable matter touching the shield centrifugally away from the bearing casing;

when the shaft is stationary, contracting said peripheral rim to touch the bearing casing to provide a seal.

2. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in Claim 1, which includes shielding the peripheral rim by means of a cowl overlapping the peripheral rim, with annular clearance.

3. - 4. (Cancelled)

5. (Currently Amended) A rotary shield assembly comprising a shaft supported for rotation in a bearing mounted in a stationary bearing casing including a side cover covering a side of the bearing casing and mounting a bearing seal, and a shield comprising

a rotary disc around the shaft proximate to and shielding a side of the bearing such as laterally to overlap or hood or cowl said side cover;

a peripheral rim along an outer periphery of the disc and at least partially overlapping the bearing casing;

a bias mechanism biasing the rim toward the bearing casing, the arrangement being adapted, during rotation, on account of mass of the rim, to cause centrifugal force to dilate the rim away from the casing to provide running clearance.

6. (Currently Amended) A rotary shield assembly as claimed in Claim 5, in which one of or both of the rim and the disc are in the form of a moulding or mouldings of a resilient moulding material, the resilience of the moulding material providing said biasing mechanism.

7. – 9.- (Cancelled)

10. (Currently Amended) A rotary shield assembly as claimed in Claim ~~6~~8, in which the disc is reinforced or stiffened.

11. (Original) A rotary shield assembly as claimed in Claim 10 in which the disc includes an internally embedded stiffening disc moulded within the synthetic polymeric disc.

12. (Currently Amended) A rotary shield assembly as claimed in Claim 5 , in which the rim is a composite rim comprising an outer peripheral cowl and an inner peripheral lip which is resiliently biased to touch the bearing casing when stationary, and in which the cowl circumferentially overlaps the lip with annular clearance.

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Previously Presented) A rotary shield assembly as claimed in Claim 5, in which the disc is drivingly secured to the shaft.

15 (Previously Presented) A rotary pump having a rotary shield assembly as claimed in Claim 5, in which the shaft of the rotary shield assembly is provided by a shaft of the rotary pump, and in which the shield of the rotary shield assembly is mounted intermediate an impeller of the pump and a bearing casing in which the shaft is supported for rotation.

16. (Original) A rotary pump as claimed in Claim 15 in which mounting of the shield on the shaft is via a circumferential flange mounted on the shaft, the shield being secured to the flange.

17. – 19. (Cancelled)